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ON THE

LAS VEGAS RANGER DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

In northern New Mexico, people have used the forest to meet their needs for shelter, food, safety, social-well being, self-esteem, and self-actualization. This fact is made evident with the presence of Indian pit houses, Spanish sheep-herder dwellings, and barbed wire representing the Anglo culture.

However, today, the uses of the Forest have shifted from the lower levels of needs to the fullfillment of higher levels of needs.

The Forest Service has, in the past, provided for the lower level of needs of humans by providing traditional uses. Our budgets also reflect the emphasis for commodity production with low level funding for amenity needs.

Recognizing the higher needs of the public, the Forest Service Chief, Dale Robertson, issued new direction in recreation policy to bring the Forest Service in line with caring for the land and serving the people--the new vision for Forest Service.

In addition, the Santa Fe National Forest has completed their Land Management Plan which will emphasize recreation.

The Las Vegas Ranger District of the Santa Fe National Forest has followed the direction of the Chief. The Plan is working with the public to develop partnerships in the formation of a non-profit association to help meet the public high level needs for recreation.

AUDIENCE

This paper is directed toward resource management agencies working with different cultures, as a guide in the recruitment of association volunteers.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: MEETING PUBLIC DEMANDS THROUGH THE FORMATION OF AN ASSOCIATION ON THE LAS VEGAS RANGER DISTRICT.

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SUMMARY:

This paper addresses the need to establish an association (which is an organization of people having a common interest) in meeting bi-cultural public demands to meet their needs on the Las Vegas Ranger District, Santa Fe National Forest. The alternatives reviewed include:

1. Continue to provide for the public demands with current volunteers and current District programs.

2. Invite neighboring Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association to open a sales outlet at the Las Vegas Ranger Station.

3. Establish a local, non-profit association or friends organization.

4. Establish a full-service, non-profit interpretive association, which would provide a sales outlet for maps, pamphlets and books at the Las Vegas Ranger Station.

The author's objectives are:

1. To determine the level needs and interests of the local publics who use the Forest.

2. To develop alternatives of how the needs can best be met and then to analyze those alternatives.

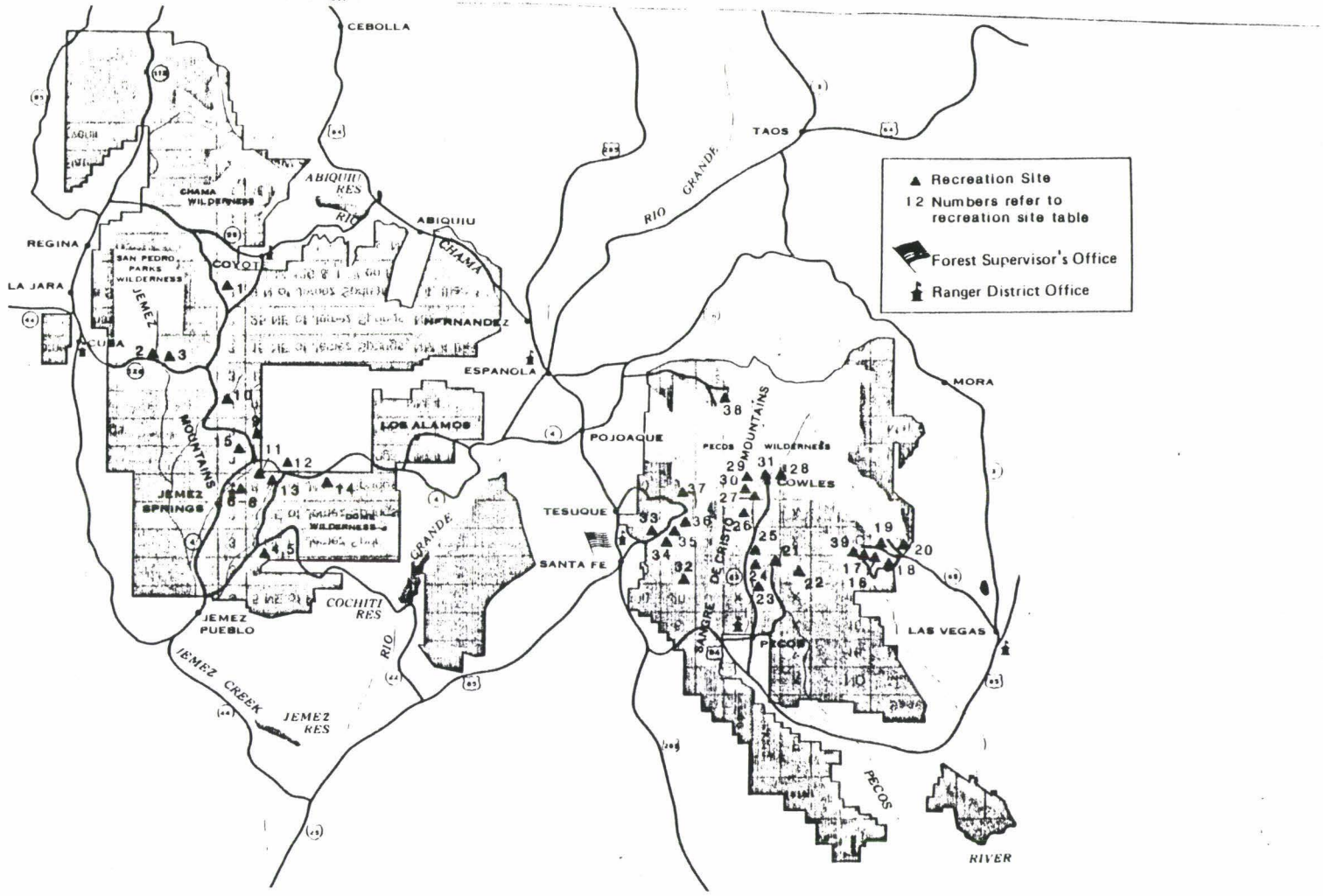
3. To select the best course of action to be taken at this time.

4. To organize the present district volunteers into an association.

5. To outline an implementation plan to establish a non-profit association for volunteers who have a common interest.

The six sub-mission statements of the Santa Fe National Forest Land Management Plan were used as the criteria for reviewing the different alternatives. Upon analysis, alternative 3, to develop a local association, was selected. Other courses of action are considered and discussed in this paper. This study relates to the Las Vegas Ranger District, but does have application to other areas.

This paper recommends initiating either a local, non-profit association or non-profit friends organization and provides an example for other Ranger districts to follow and to consider the manifold opportunities present in the communitues we live. An association would best meet the interest of the volunteers, functioning only for one ranger district.



VICINITY MAP

I. INTRODUCTION

As requested by the Forest Service in receiving comments from the Land Management Plan, the public has responded to the Forest Service to change the emphasis from the commodity output to amenity values such as recreational use and activities. As a result, the Agency has modified the recreation policies. Forest Service Chief, Dale Robertson, issued a "National Recreation Strategy," which is a blueprint for the future that will guide the Forest Service and its partners toward achieving the full potential of the land. Some of these elements deal with improving the public's satisfaction--nurturing partnerships through joint-venture agreements which encourage, establish, and sustain a diverse range of recreational services and facilities.

The first question to be asked is "What is an Association?" An association as defined by Webster, is "an organization of persons having a common interest." In the case of this study, a gathering together of local individuals or partners having a common interest, in the formation of a non-profit organization to provide recreation services to the public.

Why an association? The Forest Service has a need to carry out its commitment to its users and partners (as identified in the Santa Fe National Forest Land Management Plan), in order "to provide for the greatest good for the greatest number", as was stated by Gifford Pinchot, First Chief of the Forest Service.

Since the 1960's, when many recreational facilities were constructed, the Recreational Program for the Forest Service has continued to decline. Currently, the recreational program is managed as opportunities present themselves with other programs or interested volunteers.

Human Resource programs have greatly subsidized this effort. From 1960-1980, most of the District's facilities were reconstructed and maintained through manpower programs such as Mainstream, Job Corps, Title X, Young Adult Conservation Corp (YACC), and the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC).

In 1987, four hundred individuals petitioned the Forest Service to dedicate the John Gavahan Memorial Trail Loop, which consists of 17 miles through the Gallinas Watershed to the top of Elk Mountain, and returning to the Gallinas Trailhead (7). On October 28, 1987, Forest Supervisor, Maynard Rost, formally dedicated the trail to honor this well-known, local environmentalist, Boy Scout leader, and friend.

Why was this particular event so significant? It signified a binding together of a partnership between the Forest Service and local leaders who share a mutual interest in the development and maintenance of the Santa Fe National Forest trail system.

The Ranger District is taking this opportunity to nurture this partnership relationship in order to develop a non-profit association for the maintenance and development of the John Gavahan Memorial Trail Loop and other nearby improvements.

Current Status:

The Las Vegas Ranger District, consists of 130,000 acres and lies in the extreme eastern section of the 1.5 million acre Santa Fe National Forest. It is on the east side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains where the mountains meet the plains of eastern New Mexico.

The major population of 14,322 is centered in Las Vegas, fifteen miles from the National Forest boundary in northeastern New Mexico at an elevation of 6500 feet. Numerous small villages surround the city of Las Vegas. The District is within the counties of San Miguel and Mora, with respective populations of 22,751 San Miguel and 4,000 Mora (1). The population is predominantly hispanic.

The area is very desirable because of the abundance of nearby streams and lakes, its proximity to the mountains and National Forest lands, availability of private land, and its Hispanic cultural identity. The motto for the community is "Las Vegas -- A Breath of Fresh Air". Industry includes lumber and ranching. Major employers include the State of New Mexico with its university, vocational technical institute, medical center, and highway department. Another major employer is Montanas de Fibre--a fiberboard plant.

From a recreational standpoint, the District has a small, growing demand for recreation compared to other districts which are near major population centers. This is mainly because of the few available facilities in this area and the interest in the Pecos drainage, the popular access to the Pecos Wilderness, located 40 miles west of Las Vegas.

Recreation Visitor Days
(2% increase/yr)

1980	1987
65,749	66,680

On the District, there are two developed campgrounds, four picnic areas, and sixty miles of trails--forty miles of which are within the Pecos Wilderness. Most of the development is along the beautiful Gallinas

River, whose headwaters begin at the famous Elk Mountain (11,500 feet elevation), and the Pecos Wilderness. The Gallinas River is easily accessed by vehicle along a scenic drive from Las Vegas. It is popular with the local community for picnicking and fishing. Twenty summer homes and several private subdivisions are located along the stream and gravelled road on the Forest. A tributary to the Gallinas River, El Porvenir Creek, also provides camping and access to the Pecos Wilderness.

The District has 30,000 acres of wilderness containing several major attractions such as the beautiful promotory of Hermits Peak above El Porvenir, that rises 3,000 feet from the valley below to 10,200 feet. A cave, where a priest (the Hermit) once lived, is found near the peak. The local community conducts pilgrimages to this peak yearly.

Other major attractions in the wilderness include Beaver Creek, a high mountain stream above El Porvenir, as well as the Middle and North Forks of the Rio de la Casa. High mountain lakes such as the Middle and North Fork Lakes are located beneath cirques--providing them with water at an elevation of 12,000 feet.

The facilities are in fair condition. Dispersed sites, trailheads and trails are in poor condition and in much need of repair. Signing throughout our trail system is poor and in some cases lacking.

Most of the facilities are a direct result of past projects, initiatives, or manpower opportunities. The latter effort has helped maintain and sustain the facilities.

Budgets for recreation have been traditionally low and have declined significantly since 1980, resulting in the seasonal closure of campgrounds and picnic areas. Trails and wilderness areas are also maintained at a reduced stewardship level. As emphasis has shifted towards recreation, our funding has increased and has allowed the District greater ability to maintain the facilities.

Maintenance and upkeep of facilities have essentially been provided by the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) enrollees and district volunteers. Recent examples include the maintenance of the old Sky Line Trail from Elk Mountain to Barillas Peak and reconstruction of the Hermits Peak Trail.

Volunteers, along with other local individuals, signed a petition to designate 17 miles of trails as the John Gavahan Memorial Trail Loop, connecting the Gallinas Trail to Burro Basin, Elk Mountain, Nana Ka Trail to Johnson Mesa, and returning to the Gallinas trailhead.

This same group, headed by Dr. Joanne Sprenger, a professor at New Mexico Highlands University, a noted environmentalist and Forest Service volunteer, developed approximately five miles of cross-country ski trails during the winter of 1987-1988.

The volunteers are composed of persons who reside in the community and have other employment or are retired. The local Explorer Scouts and Boy Scouts organizations, whose leaders are also volunteers, provide

assistance to the volunteers. The local Search and Rescue group also provides some assistance as well as students and staff from the Armand Hammer United World College of the American West and New Mexico Highlands University.

Importance and Significance of the Study

This study will determine the feasibility of initiating an association. Volunteers with a common interest can, on a relatively small ranger district with a limited workforce, gather together to form an association.

The Purpose of the Paper

There is a need to provide for public recreational demands on the Las Vegas Ranger District through active partnerships at the local levels. The study will examine the John Gavahan Memorial Trail Loop as the attraction for the volunteers in development of such an association.

The study will address:

1. The current volunteers who are working with the district and other potential volunteers.

2. The importance to the Forest Service in having an association.

3. The feasibility of developing a non-profit association versus a volunteer program.

4. The development of an implementation plan which outlines steps to form an association.

The goal will be reached by utilizing the Santa Fe National Forest Land Management Plan and emphasizing the Forest's ability to initiate partnerships.

The scope of the problem is limited to the Forest adjacent to the city of Las Vegas. Future expansion of the study and associations will be addressed in the Summary.

Questions to be answered include:

1. Can an association be established in a small community with a population of 15,000?

2. Will seizing this opportunity (Dedication of the Gavahan Memorial Loop) be sufficient to establish an association?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Jean Hawthorne identified a deficiency of research dealing specifically with the interpretative/cooperative association in her project for Professional Development Program for Outdoor Recreation Management, Clemson University (4). Jackie Faike also found limited literature dealing with non-profit cooperating associations and volunteers working with governmental agencies (3).

The majority of information supporting the report came from associated publications, memos, personal communications with those providing direction, and from other individuals having experience with non-profit associations. Many of the publications found in this area relate to forming an association (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15).

The concept of a non-profit organization is not unique. Many organizations are currently in operation and functioning. The first was the Flaming Gorge Natural History Association, founded in 1967 to assist the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (4). There are currently 40 interpretive associations in existence. These organizations are called by different names and titles such as cooperative associations, interpretive associations, friends of the forest or park, library or museum associations, and mountain clubs. These 40 associations have over 190 sales outlets and provide over $1 million of benefit to the Forest Service while grossing $2.7 million.(A)

Local Southwest Region examples include:

1. New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors (VFO), organized in 1982 with four partners: the Forest Service, City of Albuquerque, State of New Mexico, and Bureau of Land Management (5).

2. Ghost Ranch Living Museum Inc.: Gross Income $143,764, with $65,500 benefit to the Forest Service.

3. Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association: Gross Income $27,925, with $3,083 benefit to the Forest Service. (This Association operates a sales outlet at the adjacent Pecos Ranger District office.)

4. Southwest Parks and Monuments Association: Gross Income $21,261 (no data available to indicate the benefit to the Forest Service)

The total gross income for the Southwest Region is $192,950, with a benefit of $68,583 to the Forest Service (12). Figures for the VFO were not available.

Currently, the Northern Arizona Natural History Association is preparing to serve three National Forests in Arizona (B).

In 1986, The President's Commission on the American Outdoors recommended that partnerships between agencies and the public be formed to enhance recreational resources.

In his Recreation Initiative statement, the Chief of the Forest Service expressed the need to establish partnerships (10). Also, prior to this statement, in the Interpretive Association Recreation Management Implementation for 1988, ten points were highlighted:

1. "Field offices will be encouraged to assist volunteer groups develop and expand Interpretive Associations (IA).

2. Training will be provided to field units to develop an understanding of IA program potential, and to teach IA management skills. A total of six workshops will be offered or planned for this year.

3. Recognition awards will be developed for IA's that have made significant contributions benefiting their communities and the Forest Service.

4. Forest Service Handbook on Interpretive Services containing guidance on the management of IA's will be developed.

5. Close-working relationships will be encouraged between the IA's and field office resources specialists. In addition to assisting recreation management, IA's can support other Forest Service missions such as wildlife habitat improvement programs.

6. The private sector will be encouraged to work with IA's to complement, rather than compete for, visitor services.

7. Field offices will be encouraged to assign worthwhile tasks to IA's. IA's will be encouraged to accept additional recruitment, training, and supervisory responsibilities.

8. IA activities will be coordinated with the "Forest for Us" Program.

9. Will encourage cooperative efforts with IA's to publish materials such as Forest recreation activity guides, and the Guide to National Recreation Trails.

10. Will initiate establishment of a National Forest Service Interpretive Association during 1988." (12)

Gerald Coutant, in his briefing paper presented at the Regional Foresters and Directors Meeting, stated the need for interpretive associations to promote National Forest programs and understanding. He further stated that individuals interested in the National Forest can assist the land manager in developing an awareness and understanding of these resources. (14) The opportunities to create new associations are unlimited (9).

Citizens are interested in associations focusing on cultural resources, natural history, wildlife management, the heritage of their area, and its development on, or adjacent to, the National Forest.

Jean Hawthorne states "a four-fold need for an association for the Descanso Ranger District Cleveland National Forest:

1. Publications - sell, distribute, produce.

2. Volunteers - utilize their services better and get them more involved with F.S. (Forest Service) program.

3. Equipment and supplies - purchase items which will enhance/ support various programs and projects.

4. Educate the public about the Forest Service."

Hawthorne further identified "that 1) Visitor use data, 2) the proximity of large population center and 3) the tremendous growth of the district's volunteer programs" are all factors which support the district's belief that it is time to establish an association.

Hawthorne also showed that associations are established based on the size of geographic areas they served. The three kinds are:

1. "Single Unit - An association which serves one particular Park/Forest unit.

2. Multi-Unit - An association which serves several Forests/Parks within the Regional area.

3. Amalgamation - An association which serves many parks/forests/ reserves located in several states or in a particular region of the country."

Hawthorne added that "single-unit associations work well if there is strong local interest and support from citizens in a particular unit". However, one way to "test the waters" is to join a multi-unit or amalgamated association for several years to determine if the support, interest and resources are present. This will determine what it will take to keep an association going, and provide sales and bookkeeping experience, etc.

Hawthorne determined that the single-unit organization, with open membership, offered the most benefits. By starting out small and later expanding its membership, and interest and resources, the association can develop (4).

Moore, et. al., defined a volunteer partnership as a group of organized volunteers (often a non-profit organization), working in cooperation with a government agency to achieve land management goals. It was further stated that these volunteer organizations take on significant long-term responsibilities, as opposed to short-term.

These partnerships are the most sophisticated form of voluntarism and are well worth the effort. It was also identified that it would take courage, awareness, tolerance, willingness and ability for the government to commit itself to a partnership using volunteers. These partnerships require careful cultivation and nurturing.

There are three important characteristics of a successful partnership:

1. "Mutual respect, trust, and regular communication.

2. Active participation and acceptance of meaningful land management responsibilities.

3. Volunteer partners are generally supportive and cooperative and not adversarial." (5).

The Santa Fe National Forest Land Management Plan (1987), states that the mission of the Forest "is to wisely manage the land resources under multiple use and sustained yield principles in order to provide optimum long-term benefits".

"This unique mission is to provide for the cultural needs of northern New Mexico. This mission also includes:

1. Contributing to the economic and social needs of the people of northern New Mexico.

2. Strengthening the rural economy of the region and encouraging the enrichment of traditional cultural values.

3. Maintaining among all Forest Service personnel an awareness of the degree to which local people in rural communities rely on the National Forest for a social, religious and economic base.

4. Recognizing that the way of life of many rural residents continues to be directly affected by the management of Forest lands.

5. Identifying, protecting, and maintaining the historic, cultural and religious sites found within the Forest.

6. Understanding the importance of access to those sites by Native American people." (16).

Recreation is one of the most important values and is precious to local residents, the visitors, and the economy. The major emphasis is in providing backcountry or dispersed recreational opportunities (16).

Through the combination of land allocation, planned construction, and rehabilitation of campgrounds and trails, some of the public demands for recreation will be met.

III. METHODS

The Need to Develop an Association

Questionnaires, interviews, and statistical methods have been employed by other studies in completing needed surveys to determine the feasibility of establishing an association. However, the methods employed in this paper are subjective rather than analytical--recognizing that high use data, proximity to large population centers, and growth of the volunteer program are important factors.

Each Ranger District or Forest Unit has unique features, resources, and cultures. Leaders of the Forest Service must utilize these talents and opportunities to meet and exceed the mission of the Forest Service. These opportunities are unlimited.

In the past eight years on the District, there have been numerous meetings between the District and leaders of the community, Forest users, and visitors to the National Forests. Observations from those interviews and visits have been used in completing this paper.

Development of Alternatives

There are a number of alternatives that should be studied. Four different alternatives to be considered are:

1. Continue to provide for public demand with the current program and few interested volunteers.

2. Allow the neighboring Interpretive Association to expand to the Las Vegas District (Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association).

3. Develop a local association (friends organization).

4. Develop a full-service Interpretive Association.

A subjective analysis of the problem will be made utilizing the sub-mission statements of the Land Management Plan as the criteria.

IV. DISCUSSION

To Determine the Need to Develop an Association on the Las Vegas Ranger District

With a continual reduction of our workforce and reduced budget in all areas, the Forest Service has had to reconsider its traditional mode of operation in order to provide service to the public. As of 1981, the Las Vegas Ranger District was no longer able to provide traditional services which limited them to simply maintaining and rehabilitating campgrounds and trails, and patrolling some wilderness areas on a limited basis (reduced service level).

At a Las Vegas Ranger District staff meeting, frustration and disappointment was expressed in not being able to keep up with maintenance of facilities and providing services to Forest visitors. During the period of 1981 thru 1987, 85 full-time employees (part of the YACC program), 5 YACC supervisory staff positions, a recreation technician, timber sale administrator, fire management staff, a range staff, and a range technician positions were lost. To help meet the needs, the Las Vegas Ranger District began sharing services with the neighboring Pecos Ranger District (including silviculture, timber, fire, range, wildlife, and watershed), leading the way to consolidation of the two units. A multi-functional staff remained to manage the recreation program. These staff changes forced the District to examine alternative solutions for accomplishing Land Management Plan objectives (14).

In addition, the Santa Fe National Forest had been involved in the development of the Forest Land Management Plan which had commenced in 1978. Response from the public showed that there were many other facilities and services that were being demanded, such as cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, camping, fishing, birdwatching, hunting, etc. The Forest Service had to reconsider and modify the emphasis to reflect the desires of the public.

To meet some of those needs, the Forest began using volunteers. They were not very successful in their first attempt to establish a volunteer program. They were unable to attract the Volunteers for the Outdoors (VFO) from Albuquerque, New Mexico, or other local volunteer organizations to work in Las Vegas. Neither funds nor facilities to house volunteers were available. Success was limited to an occasional volunteer or an event-related activity with the Boy Scouts or United World College. Volunteers sought out the more lucrative locations that offered greater incentives such as housing and subsistence and greater status.

In 1986, Dr. Joanne Sprenger, Ms. Clara Zschaler, Mr. Jose Chavez, and Mr. Robert Pearson, a local Boy Scout leader and instructor from the United World College of the American West, began trail maintenance on the Las Vegas District. These volunteers, as well as others, completed trail work during 1986 and 1987 and were recognized for their efforts.

Following the death of John Gavahan in early 1987, the District Ranger discussed with Dr. Sprenger the possibility of honoring this local leader with a memorial trail. Dr. Sprenger followed up on the idea and began obtaining signatures for a petition. By August, the petition was submitted with 400 signatures to establish the memorial trail. In October 1987, the trail dedication was celebrated. The event was well-publicized and well-received by the community. Funds were collected for a plaque and the community agreed to assume responsibility for maintaining the 17-mile loop trail. Interest in trail maintenance remains high.

During the winter of 1987, a cross-country ski trail was developed by Dr. Sprenger and other volunteers (Fifteen persons were involved in this effort.). They opened up old logging spurs into a loop for local skiers.

These shifts along with the mid-course correction suggested by Chief Robertson, has resulted in the Las Vegas Ranger District embarking on a joint-venture partnership opportunity with local volunteers. This was viewed as an opportunity to develop an association.

Analysis of Alternatives

Four alternatives are considered in relation to the Santa Fe National Forest Land Management Plan sub-mission statements as referenced in page 8.

Alternative 1 - Current Programs

This alternative will meet most of the sub-mission statements at a minimal level. Economic, traditional ways of life and Native Americans will be most adversely affected by this alternative because of the real lack of a sustained program that would provide for more contacts with the local community.

Alternative 1 is essential in continuing work with interested local volunteers. It would contribute towards meeting parts of each of the sub-mission statements to a limited degree. The degree of success is dependent upon the interest of the volunteers and the efforts of the Forest Service. A volunteer coordinator could coordinate a program that would partially meet the sub-mission statements. This could operate as a quasi-association; serving as an organizer of the volunteers, without all the hassles of paperwork as required for a non-profit association.

The impact on Ranger District personnel, will of course, be greater than with an association. All volunteers, including the coordinators, would have to be recruited and trained each year. Turnover is expected to be high each year.

The interest to maintain the Gavahan Memorial Loop Trail and the cross-country ski trail is expected to remain high. The local volunteers and scouts would continue to maintain the loop and ski trail.

A greater coordinated effort would be made to provide for other opportunities such as trailhead development, interpretive opportunities, handicapped trails, nature walks, nature talks, sales outlet for books, maps and local conservation publications, visitor information center development, sign construction and signing, etc.

Alternative 2 - Neighboring Association

This alternative will greatly depend upon the ability of the Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association to develop an interpretive sales outlet on the Las Vegas Ranger District. At present, little has been accomplished since the initial meeting with the Association in the summer of 1986. This organization originated on the Cibola National Forest and has established a local book sales outlet on the Pecos Ranger District.

In personal communications with Ms. Matsen from the Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association, she indicated that they still favored establishing a sales outlet in Las Vegas. However, judging by the coordination problems experienced with the Pecos Ranger District, there is doubt that there will be much progress this year. The Forest will have to work very closely with this organization to cultivate a successful joint-venture, partnership once an agreement has been reached.

The Association may meet some of the sub-mission statements of the Forest--especially the local need for services; but will not have the sensitivity and understanding to relate to the local community as they are centered in Albuquerque (120 miles away).

Although this alternative is slightly preferred to alternative 1, it would not be able to provide all the other services that could be provided by the volunteers such as trail maintenance and signing. The Native American would be the most affected because of the limited contact.

Alternatives 1 and 2 could work well together and gain from the benefits of each other.

Alternative 3 - Establish a Local Association

The mobilization of the volunteers to form a non-profit association will provide a much needed service to the public. Partnership efforts with the Forest Service will maximize trail maintenance and reconstruction, improve trailhead parking, improve signing and directional markings of trails and roads, and enable closure of unnessary roads and trails. It would also provide for other much needed projects. Through this alternative, our public will be better served. Our employees, in turn, will become more involved with the community and more aware of their needs and interests.

This alternative meets most of the sub-mission statements and offers the most sensible direction to follow at this time--considering the small group of supporters. Because of the long-term nature of this alternative, the economy and social needs of our customers would be met in time. Also, the traditional values and the way of life of our users would be better understood. The awareness level of our employees would also increase substantially.

The association will provide stability to District efforts in developing a solid marketing plan based upon the volunteers and the Forest Service.

Initiating the association will require considerable time and energy from Ranger District personnel in order to nurture the formation and development.

Since the association would be local, the organization would involve the community which would help meet the economic, traditional values, awareness, way of life and Native American sub-mission statements.

A broad spectrum of recreational opportunities will be pursued as individuals having different interests join the association. This will significantly improve the recreation program.

Alternative 4 - Interpretive Association

An interpretive association brings in revenue to the local Forest office and provides services to the public such as the sales of maps, pamphlets, books, and literature. In addition, information is provided to the customer. The revenues provided can help fund improvements for the management of the office. The savings in office help could provide funding for field personnel working in trails, wilderness, and developed and dispersed recreation.

This alternative would significantly strengthen the rural economy, meet the social needs of the local people, increase the Forest Service personnel awareness levels of the needs of the local people and increase recognition of the way of life of the rural people. The understanding of the needs of access would be improved. Through time and working with people, trust would be developed and their needs more fully understood.

This alternative meets the sub-mission statements more completely than the others.

TABLE 1: SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES
AS COMPARED TO THE SUB-MISSION STATEMENTS

SUB-MISSION STATEMENTS--LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN

	Economic Social a.	Traditional Values b.	Awareness c.	Way of Life d.	Religious Sites e.	Native American f.
Alternatives						
1. Volunteers	2	3	3	2	1	2
2. Neighboring Associations	3	2	3	3	1	1
3. Association	4	4	4	4	1	2
4. Interpretive Association	4	5	5	4	1	3

Ratings: 1 - Doesn't Achieve
2 - Minimally Achieves
3 - Moderately Achieves
4 - Highly Achieves
5 - Very Highly Achieves

Selection of an Action Plan

Alternative 3 will serve as the best course of action to pursue at this time. The core group of leaders are present to initiate the association.

The following steps are necessary to carry out this alternative and to provide for future direction towards the establishment of an interpretive association--Alternative 4:

1. The association must start out small in order to market the concept in the community. Considerable nurturing will be required in order to develop understanding, trust and commitment, with the membership

2. Time must be taken to complete necessary paperwork for incorporation within the state of New Mexico and attain a non-profit status with the Internal Revenue Service.

3. Time must be taken to develop and train suitable leadership.

4. A strong sense of mission and purpose must be developed to draw new members.

5. Funds must be raised (seed money) to carry out the mission and objectives of the projects.

6. Time will be required to develop the joint-venture agreement.

Implementation Plan

Action To Be Taken	Purpose Of Action	Responsibility	When
Initial Meeting	Meet with local public interested in establishing association	District Staff & Volunteer Leadership	3-88
Publicize event	Get the work out	District Staff & Volunteer Coordinator	3-88
Develop framework for association	Determine leadership & mission	Officers of Association & Forest Service	5-88
Conduct work-shop & training	Train officers	Forest Service	FY88 FY89
Develop agreement for association	Joint-venture Agreement	Forest Service Association	FY89

Develop interpretive association	Expand services	Association	FY89 FY90-95
Complete paperwork for submission to state of NM and IRS	Incorporation & Non-Profit Status	Officers of Association	7-89

VI. SUMMARY

This paper deals with the feasibility of establishing an association on the Las Vegas Ranger District in New Mexico. It addresses the need to establish an association, the possible alternatives, the selection of an alternative and the development of an implementation plan to establish the association.

The need focuses upon the opportunity to initiate an association, and comply to the course correction directed by Chief Robertson, to establish joint-venture agreements. These options were reviewed in relation to the six sub-mission statements of the Santa Fe National Forest Land Management Plan.

Alternative 3, establishing a local association, offers the most realistic course of action and meets a significant level of sub-mission statements.

Eventhough alternative 3 establishes a full-scale local interpretive association, alternative 4 meets more of the sub-missions statements. However, this course of action cannot be realized at this time, given the present status of the commitment of the present volunteers to the partnership at Las Vegas.

An implementation plan has been developed with the target date set at FY89. Initial meetings have been planned and the strategy set into motion.

Conclusions

Based upon the findings of this study:

1. The Las Vegas Ranger District has a need to develop a local association, possibly a friends organization centered around the John Gavahan Memorial Trail Loop. It could be expanded to include other trails and other facilities such as cross-country skiing.

2. The establishmlent of a local association will best meet the mission of the Forest at this time. It will take time to firmly develop and train the leadership, develop the mission, and recruit members of the association.

3. A target date of FY88 for the initiation of the association was set and met.

4. This paper does not conclusively prove that an event-related activity is sufficient to initiate an association. However, an event-related activity will certainly mobilize the interest of various publics to join the Forest in joint partnership.

5. Based on the interest of volunteers and others, an association can be established. It is time to develop the association--with the core of current volunteers.

Recommendations

1. Many opportunities exist to develop local associations throughout the Forest Service. These opportunities are event-related and will draw the interest of our local community to participate as partners in the management of the District to meet the mission of the Forest.

   Each Ranger District should take advantage of these opportunities and establish local partnerships. The direction is clear. The Chief has directed the Forest Service to proceed with partnerships. This direction needs to be implemented.

2. While interpretive associations will offer a greater spectrum of services in the long-run, friends organizations offer the local manager a significant tool to draw the interest of volunteers. The friends concept allows the organization to crawl before they walk. Establishment of the volunteer program has already laid the foundation for forming partnerships.

3. Time and energy needs to be devoted to nurturing the leadership of the association. Experience gained from over 40 interpretive associations supports this premise in establishing associations.

4. A single-unit association is recommended for the Las Vegas Ranger District. Emphasis should be placed on trail maintenance and signing. Interests in other facilities or other efforts can be added at a later date.

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PERSONAL COMMUNICATION CITED

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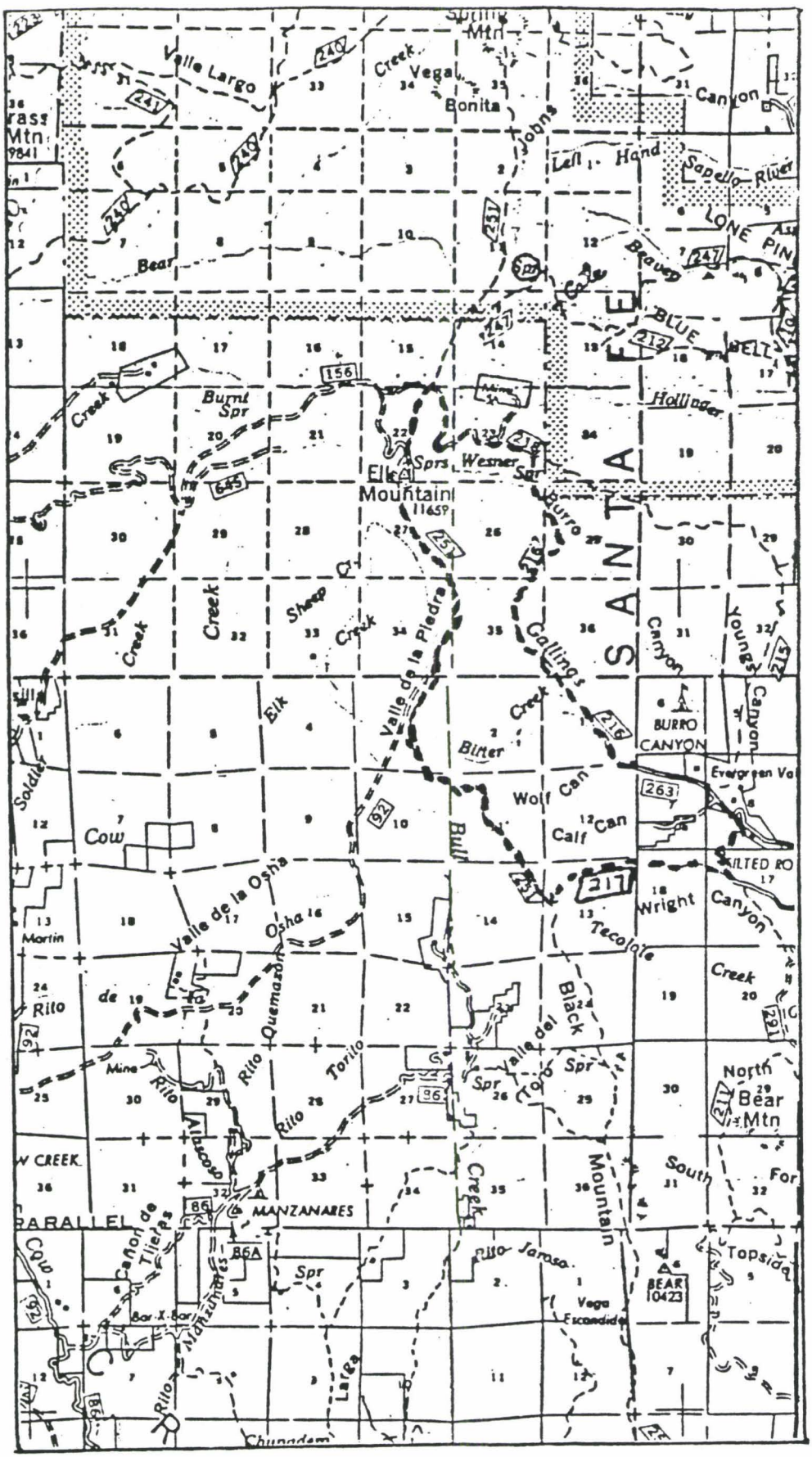
B. USDA Forest Service, M. Sugaski, Personal Communication, R-3, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest, Heber Ranger District.

APPENDIX A



JOHN M. GAVAHAN MEMORIAL TRAIL LOOP

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Las Vegas
Ranger District

APPENDIX
B

Reply To: 1300

Date: November 3, 1987

Subject: Success Story-Las Vegas

To: Forest Supervisor

Attached are two success stories for submission for consideration at the Management Team Conference in December.

/s/J. R. Montoya

JAMES R. MONTOYA
District Ranger

Attachments

SUCCESS STORY-LAS VEGAS RANGER DISTRICT

SITUATION-(WESNER TIMBER SALE)

A harvesting proposal within the Las Vegas Municipal Watershed on multiple use lands, raised considerable controversy from various entities, such as the City of Las Vegas, State of New Mexico (Environmental Improvement Division), Sierra Club, and other parties.

ISSUES-

Timber harvesting would degrade water quality in the watershed.

RESOLUTION

1. Timber Sale withdrawn to allow the City of Las Vegas time to complete the Watershed Plan for the Gallinas Watershed outside the National Forest.

2. Demonstration Timber Sale established on an adjacent watershed (Tecolote Watershed) to demonstrate Shyline logging and Best Management Practice. In addition, monitor water quality before the sale, during the sale and after the sale.

OPPORTUNITY-Partnership

In an effort to develop trust and commitment, a "partnership" was developed with the City of Las Vegas, New Mexico State Environmental Improvement Division, U.S. Geological Service, New Mexico Highlands University and the Forest Service. A plan was developed and funded by all the parties. The study will consist of a Timber Harvest Study for the Tecolote Timber Sale and the Gallinas Creek Water Quality. A final report will be published after 1991.

SUCCESS STORY-LAS VEGAS R.D.

DEDICATION OF THE JOHN GAVIHAN MEMORIAL TRAIL LOOP

SITUATION

The trail system on the Las Vegas Ranger District have been in a bad state of disrepair. System trails have been maintained and certain sections reconstructed over time through man-power programs and other initiatives, but the public had not ever been involved. The non-system trails on the district have not been maintained and were difficult to even find.

With our funds continuing to decrease, efforts were made by the district to involve the local community. Boy Scout leaders, World College instructors, and local people showed interest in volunteering to get involved.

At the same time, the district was involved in a major controversy with the Wesner Timber Sale, which proposed to harvest timber within the Gallinas Watershed. The same persons who showed interest in our trails were also concerned about harvesting timber within the watershed. However, their concerns were not so much to stop the harvesting as to help the district through positive efforts such as trail maintenance.

In the summer of 1986 and 1987, two local persons became our volunteers as well as a local Boy Scout group from the World College. As a result, a non-system trail was opened and a trail loop of some 17 miles was developed.

One of the local environmentalists, John Gavihan, worked very closely with the Forest Service through his employment with the New Mexico Environmental Improvement Division, and through his membership with the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations. In addition, he was involved with the Adelante RCD, serving as the Chairman and the Planning and Zoning Commission for the County of San Miguel, serving as the Chairman. Through many meetings, he always remained with the best interest of Caring For the Land and to Serve People. He was not a full advocate of timber harvesting but was supportive by always providing opportunities to discuss the concerns of the public out on the ground. His concern for threatened plant species was genuine-- especially along the loop trail area along the Burro Canyon adjacent to the Pecos Wilderness and Elk Mountain.

During the late winter of 1986, John Gavihan passed away. Leaving behind a long legacy of people who had been influenced and helped in their careers.

PROPOSAL

During the summer of 1987, Dr. Joanne Sprenger initiated a petition to establish a trail loop in memory of John Gavihan. This proposal had nearly 400 signatures and included many dignitaries including many employees from the Environmental Improvement Division. The proposal included three trails, the Gallinas Trail, the Skyline Trail that skirted the top of Elk Mountain, the Nana Ka Trail as well as other short spurs from Johnson Mesa to Gallinas Canyon.

Funds were also collected from the public to finance the purchase of the plaque.

CONCLUSION

On October 27, 1987, Forest Supervisor, Maynard Rost and other dignitaries such as the Mayor of the City of Las Vegas, Chairman of County Commission of San Miguel, State Senator and State Representatives and, of course, his widow officially dedicated the 17 mile trail loop.

At the session, an effort was made to establish an Interpretive Association to adopt the trail loop and to work in partnership with the Forest Service. Dr. Joanne Sprenger has accepted the leadership of this association.

Un ted States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Santa Fe National Forest
Las Vegas Ranger District
1926 7th Street
Las Vegas, NM 87701

APPENDIX
C

Reply To: 2320

Date: October 20, 1987

On certain occasions, the Santa Fe National Forest recognizes certain individuals for their contribution towards Caring For The Land and for Serving People. On October 28th, we will be recognizing Mr. John Gavahan, posthumously, by formally dedicating the John Gavahan Trail Loop in his honor. The ceremony will begin at 1:00 PM, at the Trailhead of the Gallinas Trail.

You are cordially invited to attend this special event. Special guests and speakers will participate in the dedication of this trail loop.

Directions to the Trailhead are as follows: take Hwy. 65 through Montezuma and Gallinas, past the town of Gallinas and continue left on Forest Road 263 to the Forest Boundary (to the end of the pavement); continue driving straight for 7 miles to the dead end of the Gallinas Canyon Road. The Trailhead for Gallinas Canyon begins here.

Coordinated travel will begin from the Las Vegas Ranger Station at 12:00 noon for those desiring to travel together.

For further information, please give me a call at the office 425-3534 or at home 425-8244.

Sincerely,

JAMES R. MONTOYA
District Ranger

cc: Maynard Rost:SO

United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Santa Fe National Forest
Las Vegas Ranger District
1926 7th Street
Las Vegas, NM 87701

Reply To: 2320

Date: October 28,1987

JOHN GAVAHAN MEMORIAL TRAIL LOOP DEDICATION

OPENING PRAYER----------	REV. RANDY LOY, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WELCOMING----------	MAYNARD ROST, FOREST SUPERVISOR
OPENING REMARKS----------	COMMISSION CHAIRMAN, MAX MADRID SR. SAN MIGUEL COUNTY
TESTIMONIAL----------	SENATOR ALFRED NELSON REPRESENTATIVE SAM VIGIL MAYOR LEROY SANCHES, CITY OF LAS VEGAS MARTIN LEDGER, LAS VEGAS-SAN MIGUEL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEIL WEBER, DISTRICT II, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT DIVISION ANN YOUNG, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMEMT FRIENDS OF JOHN GAVAHAN
PRESENTATION----------	DR. JOANNE SPRENGER, FOREST SERVICE VOLUNTEER AND ORIGINATOR OF THE PETITION TO CREATE GAVAHAN TRAIL LOOP
DEDICATION----------	DR. JOANNE SPRENGER, FOREST SERVICE VOLUNTEER AND JAMES R. MONTOYA, DISTRICT RANGER
UNVEILING----------	
CLOSING ----------	JIM MONTOYA, DISTRICT RANGER

APPENDIX

USDA FS REGION 3

MANAGEMENT TEAM CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 1988

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

CREATIVE SOLUTION FORUM

CHAIRMAN - NEIL PAULSON, FOREST SUPERVISOR

COCONINO, NATIONAL FOREST

JIM MONTOYA, PRESENTS

(11)

CREATIVE SOLOTIONS - FORUMS Neil PAULSON

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS (JIM MONTOYA)

Nontraditional model to involve those publics who don't normally get involved in our programs though traditional means.

Through our past efforts, we in the Forest Service have been successful in getting those interested people in our programs as volunteers or interpretive associations. However, our other publics remain uninvolved.

I am in the process of developing a model that will serve as a guide to involve those other publics such as the Hispanics, Indians, or other publics. The main thrust of this effort is to go visit with our various public and listen to them.

Perhaps by visiting with our publics we can hear what their interest and uses are of National Forest and develop nontraditional involvement, i.e.:

1. Interpretive Sites
2. Trail adoption, maintenance
3. Historic or prehistoric site development
4. Cultural story display at Ranger Station, court houses, on site.
5. Other opportunities

A method or mechanism to move this effort may be:

1. Interpretive Association
2. Volunteers
3. Challenge Grants
4. Other Methods

Suggestions offered were the following:

1. Work with individuals.
2. Send the word out thorugh our workers and listen to what our workers bring back.
3. There is no silent majority.
4. Two or three culture communication problems must be bridged in order to communication.
5. Management by wandering around.
6. There is no mechanisms.

Las Vegas Victorian Gazette
12-22-87, Vol I--Issue 20

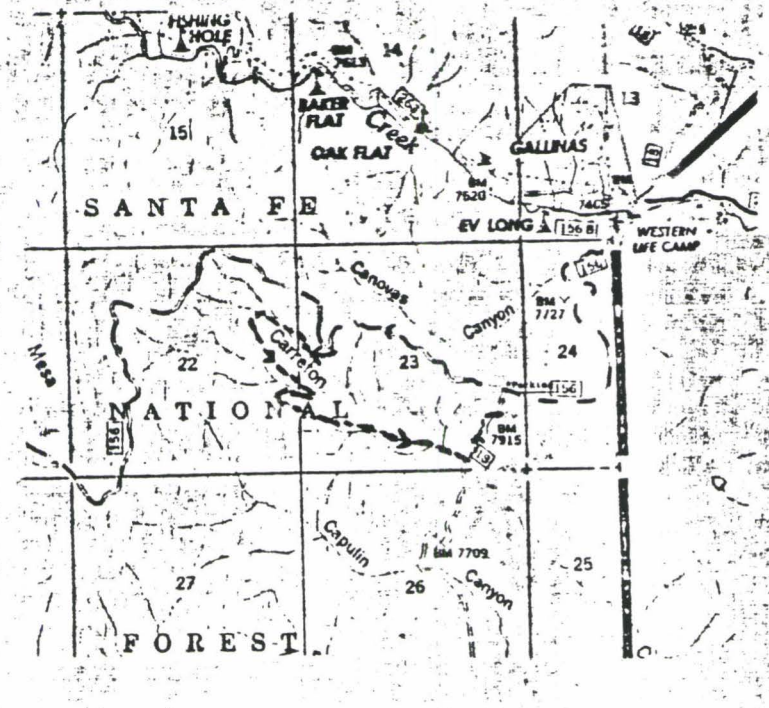
LV Gets X-Country Course

There is a growing number of people in the Las Vegas area who enjoy cross country skiing as a form of recreation in the winter months. It is also an excellent way of developing a high level of cardiovascular fitness, depending upon the intensity with which one participates.

Last September a group of nine volunteers, with the cooperation of the local Forest Service staff, developed a new cross country ski loop up Gallinas Canyon. Parking for the new trail is planned at the junction of Johnson Mesa Road and the Mineral Hill Road (County Road 18) about 1.7 miles past Western Life Camp and E. V. Long Campground.

In November Martin Leger, Director of the Las Vegas/ San Miguel Chamber of Commerce, presented a request to the San Miguel County Commissioners, asking them to plow this short stretch from the Gallinas Canyon Road to the parking area. The Commissioners unanimously voted to approve the request--however, it will probably be several days after a snowfall before the area will be plowed. High priority jobs such as opening up school bus routes and making it possible for rural families to get to town will rightfully take precedence. While San Miguel County doesn't have a downhill ski area to attract tourist dollars like Santa Fe and Taos, we do have some good cross country possibilities.

From the parking area shown on the enclosed map, skiers can reach the start of the trail by continuing nine/tenths of a mile up the Johnson Mesa Road before branching off to the left on an old logging road. The rail winds gently through Carraton Canyon for 2 1/2 miles, joining County Road 18 less than a mile below the parking area. Skiers can either follow County Road 18 back to the parking area or follow another old logging road which takes off to the left from where Carraton Canyon junctions with County Road 18. This alternate route will be a little narrower and steeper but shorter than following the road. Snow should stay on the trail longer than on the road which is more exposed to the sun. The alternate return route willjoin the Mineral Hill Road about 100 yards below the parking area. Length of this loop trail is approximately 4 1/2 miles.



There is an alternate loop which would be appropriate for intermediate or advanced skiers due to a steeper downhill stretch. It begins about a quarter mile after you leave the Johnson Mesa Road and rejoins the original trail a little more than a mile farther down.

The nine volunteers who donated a day of labor to develop this loop September 12 include Emily Gavahan, Sharon Litherland, Jon Schlosser, Robert Smith, Joanne Sprenger, and Mary, Deborah, Becky and Joe Whiteman. Bruce Higgins of the Las Vegas Forest Service Office originally proposed the route and assisted Jon Schlosser and Joanne Sprenger in scouting it. Jim Montoya and Tony Roybal in the Forest Service Office supported the project and ordered signs to mark the trail which are ready for the volunteers to erect.

Cross country skiing (Nordic) differs from downhill skiing (Alpine) in several ways. Cost is one of the biggest differences. Just a pair of Alpine ski boots may cc more than the complete packag (skis, bindings, boots and poles) f Nordic skiing. Shoppers at the Fe ruary sales can often find a comple package of new Nordic equipme for around $100. Daily fees for A pine skiing can range from arour $18 per person to almost $30 f just the lift ticket. Lessons wi boost the price even more. Nord skiers, once they have their equi ment, usually pay only the cost gasoline to reach their destinatio whether it be the golf course (sta off the greens when skiing), a pa ture, or an old logging road. Le than four inches of snow is usual sufficient for cross country purpo es.

The injury rate for cross count skiing is much lower than that fc Alpine. Cross country is typicall done on the level or gentle slopes While a person may still fall occ sionally, you usually aren't going a fast.

It isn't as important to take e pensive lessons in Nordic skiin Many beginners rent equipment first time or two and go with frie who ahow them a few simple te niques. By staying on fairly le terrain, and by sidestepping do any steep areas, beginners can hav relatively safe, pleasant experien just going at a walking pace. Ther are no lines waiting for a lift bac up the mountain.

It is illegal to harrass wild an mals which are under extra stres during the winter months.

Sipapu Ski Area 50 miles nort of Las Vegas is probably the closes area to rent cross country equipmer (as well as downhill.) There are als some nice areas near Sipapu whic are popular with cross countr skiers.